

Social Media Technology at the MET Cloisters

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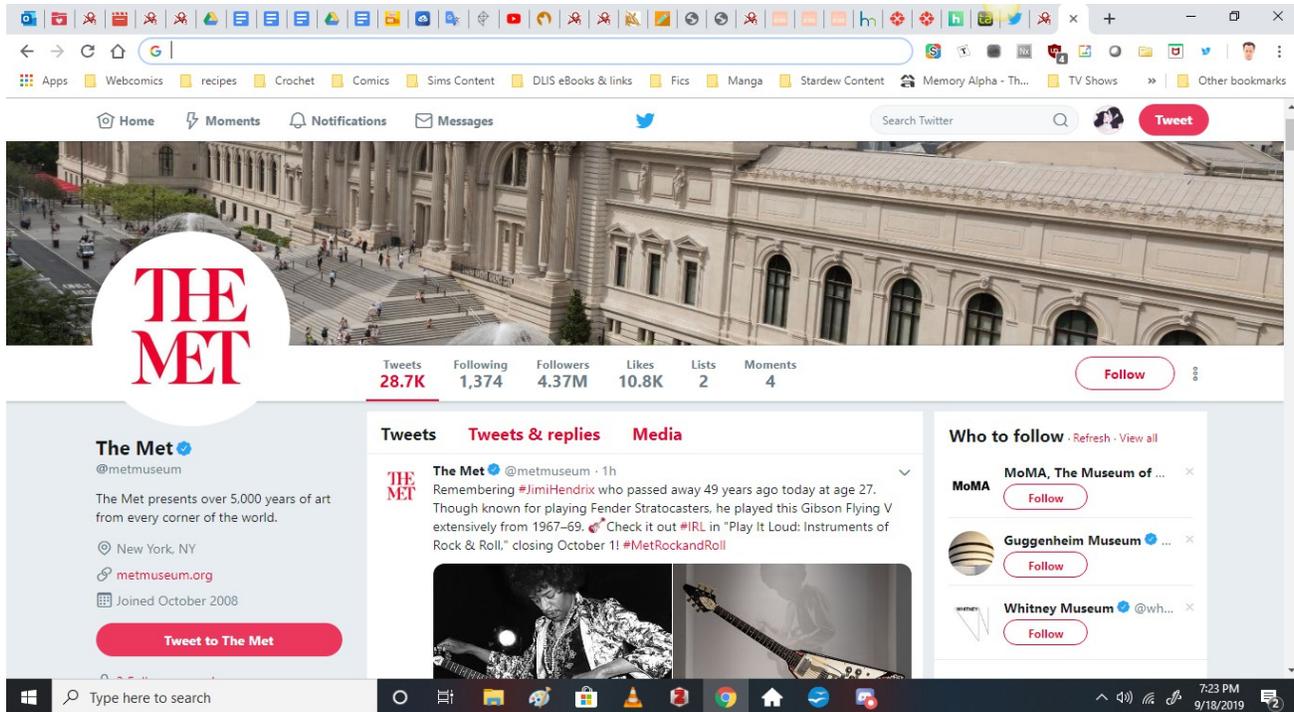
LIS 258

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## Social Media Link:

### [Twitter page for the MET](#)



*Screenshot of the main Twitter page for the Metropolitan Museum of Art*

**Discuss the social media features of this implementation, and speculate on why the designers might have chosen these features:**

The Metropolitan Museum of Art already has its own official Twitter page, where it posts information on events and exhibits at both the main location and the Cloisters. With Twitter, it's easy to share information about the museum on a widespread basis, making them accessible not only to locals but also to international patrons as well. On Twitter, the museum can share using searchable hashtags, can provide links to pages on their website concerning the exhibit a post is featuring, and retweet posts from other users to be shared on their main Twitter page. Plus, their own posts can be retweeted by patrons, which allows them to be shared with followers who can then, in turn, become interested in the

different events and exhibits the museum has. This gives the MET an easily accessible, completely free method of reaching audiences on a larger scale, engaging even distant patrons via posts connected to or retweeted by the MET Twitter. As said in the NMC Horizon Report (2016), patrons:

“...can check in via social media and document their experience with photos and personal perspectives, instantly inviting their networks to be a part of their visit” (p. 18).

**Explain why you believe this exhibit might serve as a good example of interactivity for your type of collection (or object):**

While the MET Twitter does include posts about the Cloisters, and while there are Twitter accounts specifically dedicated to the Cloisters, none of said accounts are officially connected to the MET itself, and posts concerning the Cloisters' collection can get lost in the information about the larger and more well-known MET main location. With an official Twitter of its own, the Cloisters would be able to reach audiences the same way the MET Twitter does, without the risk of tweets about its exhibits and events getting overwhelmed. It could also include a link in the description to the main MET Twitter, as well as its home page on the MET's website. In fact, the MET could try reaching out to one of these patron-run Twitters and recruit the user who runs it, so that an entirely new Twitter doesn't have to be created, and someone who already enjoys the Cloisters enough to post about its exhibits would be able to do so with the backing of the MET museum, therefore reaching a wider audience.



*Screenshot of a patron-run, unofficial Twitter for the Cloisters*

With its own official Twitter, when tweets are made about a specific exhibit or object – such as Count Ermengol's tomb – a short description should be given, along with a picture and a link to the object's page on the MET website, which holds more information about the object as well as audio clips and related artifacts. Specific hashtags could be created for the Cloisters, its exhibits, and its events, that users could follow and retweet. The Cloisters could also retweet from patrons who have posted about their visits to the museum, which will, as said, be shared with all of their own followers and the followers of the Cloisters' Twitter page. Events, too, could be tweeted about in real time, with patrons attending or participating sharing their experiences and piquing the interest of others in future Cloisters events.

**Identify at least two potential audiences for your interactive exhibit, and explain how they would benefit from your ideas:**

The audiences most likely to profit from a Cloisters-specific Twitter would be international

patrons, educators, and students. Using Twitter to engage with the Cloisters allows patrons who can't travel there in person the chance to get details and better information on the Cloisters' exhibits, and Twitter also has a translate feature that, while imperfect (much in the same way that Google Translate is) can allow non-English speakers to get the gist of what a tweet posted in English is saying. In addition, a post can be linked to its twin on foreign social media sites which will be easier for international patrons to interact with. As mentioned in the 2015 NMC Horizon Report, the MET has enjoyed great success on social media platforms like China's Weibo, where some posts have been viewed over three million times (p. 16).

Educators, in the meantime, can use Twitter posts to create an interactive way for students to engage with the exhibits at the Cloisters, and perhaps even get them interested in visiting and sharing their own experiences through their Twitters. Students, after all, are likely to already be spending a large amount of time on social media accounts, so having a specific Twitter they can follow allows them to engage with the museum in a casual yet entertaining way while also sharing tweets from the Cloisters on their own Twitters, spreading information about the museum to others.

## References

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